

# Sweet & Sour Paris Peace Conference

by Nidra Poller



Given a choice, monsieur the diplomat, between two International Peace Conferences-Kazakhstan for Syria or Paris for the Middle East- which would you prefer? Would you like to plough your brain trying to sort out the Islamist rebels from the plain Islamists, finding someone less brutal to replace Assad and a few factions to support him, resisting pressure from the Russians, Iranians, Turks, Hezbollah and the like? Wouldn't you rather sit around a table in Paris, rubbing shoulders with distinguished ladies and gentlemen, and repeating that it is urgent to settle the "oldest conflict" by finally implementing the oldest solution: two states side by side in security?

For low ranking journalists that didn't have the chance to come anywhere near the delegations, "covering" the Conference meant receiving the elevated address of Foreign Affairs Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault who would present the conclusions

reached by the diplomats united in a spirit of sincere friendship for the parties to the conflict. (The day after the Conference, that hasn't generated much interest worldwide, documents in several languages and videos of some speeches were posted on the Ministry site. <http://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2016/12/kerrys-speech-on-middle-east-is-unacceptable-to-the-palestinians.php>

“First, you cannot make the issue of Palestinian refugees only an issue of compensation; you cannot deny people their right to return to their home,” Limiting the rights of Palestinian refugees to compensation? Unacceptable! “Second, recognition of Israel as a Jewish state would deny the right of the Palestinian people who are citizens of Israel and that is totally unacceptable.” Israel cannot be a Jewish and a democratic state at the same time,” concludes Barghouti, he too speaks the voice of the world.

\* Daniel Sibony, *Islam, Phobie, Culpabilité*

Original French version published by